

## Nevada County Transportation Commission

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Nevada County. NCTC coordinates state and federal transportation programs for Nevada County, the City of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and the Town of Truckee.

### 2005 NCTC Commissioners

#### Nate Beason, Vice-Chairman

Nevada County District I Supervisor

#### Tim Brady

Member-at-Large

#### Patti Ingram

Grass Valley City Council

#### Russ Steele

Member-at-Large

#### Josh Susman

Truckee Town Council

#### Robin Sutherland

Nevada County District IV Supervisor

#### Conley Weaver, Chairman

Mayor, City of Nevada City

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The Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter is published quarterly. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please write or call the Nevada County Transportation Commission office.

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### Upcoming NCTC Meeting

The next meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission is scheduled on:

**Wednesday, March 15, 2006 at 8:30 a.m., Grass Valley City Council Chambers, 125 East Main Street, Grass Valley, CA.**

# NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

Issue 27

"Creating a better future by building upon successes of the past"

March 2006



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### Unmet Needs Public Hearing Set for March 15<sup>th</sup>

A Public Hearing will be held at the **Transit Services Commission** meeting, on March 15, 2006 at 10:30 a.m. in the Grass Valley City Council Chambers, 125 East Main Street.



The purpose of this Public Hearing is to receive testimony from the citizens of Nevada County on unmet transit needs that might be "reasonable to meet." The definition of reasonable to meet looks at factors such as equity, timing, feasibility, economy, community acceptance, and cost effectiveness.

Unmet transit needs are trips that are not provided for individuals to maintain a minimum standard of living. This could include such trips as for medical and dental services, shopping, employment, personal business, education, recreation, and American with Disabilities Act compliance.

If you are unable to attend, but would like to provide input on unmet transit needs, you may mail, phone, fax, or email the Nevada County Transportation Commission by March 31<sup>st</sup> with your comments. See page 4 for contact information.

## Safety a Priority on SR 49

*In response to a public outcry for needed safety improvements along State Route 49*, Caltrans has proposed several immediate and short-term actions between the Combie/Wolf Road intersection and McKnight Way in Grass Valley (see list below).

A special public meeting was held the night of January 18<sup>th</sup> to address safety concerns on SR 49. Bruce and Debra Jones of south Nevada County, in cooperation with District 2 Supervisor Sue Horne, and past NCTC Commissioner Chet Krage, organized the event and over 300 citizens attended. Caltrans District 3 Deputy Director Tom Wood, Sgt. Whitmore of the California Highway Patrol, and NCTC's Executive Director Dan Landon gave presentations at the meeting. Staff from Assemblyman Keene's and Senator Aanstad's offices were also in attendance.



"Soft Barrier" Rumble Strip proposed as a short-term improvement on SR 49

Bruce and Debra Jones also requested the issue of SR 49 safety be placed on the Transportation Commission's January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting agenda, and they were in attendance to express their concerns. Mr. and Mrs. Jones were victims of a near fatal accident in 2003 on SR 49 just north of the Combie Road intersection. Their goals are to promote awareness of the increased accidents and fatalities in 2005 along this portion of SR 49, and the need for immediate safety improvements.



The **Caltrans SR 49 Safety Action Plan** presented by Tom Wood is in three phases:

#### Phase I: Immediate Actions

- Initiate Safety Task Force [first meeting held on February 9, 2006]
- Support CHP increased efforts to enforce speed and headlight section [ongoing]
- Public awareness measures [signs posted]
- Additional speed limit/warning signs
- Replace reflective markers [done]

#### Phase II: Short-Term Improvements

- Centerline "soft barrier" rumble strip and restripe lanes – photo above [this summer]
- Restripe to restrict passing at two locations

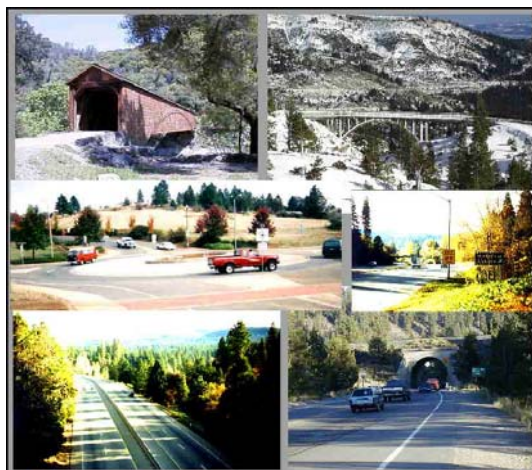
#### Phase III: Long-Term Major Improvements

- Widening of road, build shoulders, install center concrete barrier where needed.

The Task Force will continue meeting to review plans, develop strategies, take action, and set a direction for future activities. Stay tuned!

## Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter

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## NCTC Evening Workshop



### NCTC Mission Statement

*The mission of the Nevada County Transportation Commission is to plan, communicate, and coordinate with the citizens and decision makers of Grass Valley, Nevada City, Nevada County, and the Town of Truckee, and with Caltrans to identify transportation needs, propose solutions, and assist in implementing projects to create a balanced regional transportation system, while protecting the rural qualities and historic character of Nevada County.*

The Nevada County Transportation Commission conducted an evening workshop on February 15<sup>th</sup> to allow members of the public to be present to share their thoughts as the Commission discussed their Mission Statement, goals, strategies, and priorities. Prior commissioners were also invited and asked to share their opinions as well. The workshop was well attended, and many shared their thoughts and opinions. Staff will summarize the list of comments and present them at a future NCTC meeting.

The review of the *NCTC Mission Statement* brought up several key points. It was stated in various ways that “communication” is critical. First of all it is imperative to have a healthy and frequently utilized stream of conversation between NCTC, the local jurisdictions, Caltrans, and the public. That concept then needs to expand to stakeholders outside of the county’s sphere of influence, such as Placer County and other regional groups with similar interests. It was also stated that NCTC needs to sharpen its communication skills, be more responsive, listen and understand, and to periodically capture and review how the process is going, with a final result of better informed citizens. One Commissioner suggested the goals and values mentioned in the Mission Statement be removed and a Vision Statement be created that the jurisdictions would also agree with. The public commented they would like to see a more balanced and safety-oriented system where transit users, bicycle commuters, pedestrians, and the disabled have equal attention as car users.

(continued on next column)



A member of the public shares her thoughts at the evening workshop

A suggested goal was to focus on new ways of securing funding, such as lobbying legislators, implementing a sales tax measure, updating the Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee program, and to become a “self-help” county. Many felt it was important to do short-term, inexpensive fixes on roads and bicycle routes.

At the end of the workshop the Commissioners indicated their number one desire was to have a “Regional Road Map” of the County to clearly identify which facilities are included in regional planning. **NCTC**

## Gateway Monument Planned on SR 49

The Nevada County Board of Supervisors recently approved a design of natural stone that will serve as a Gateway Monument to greet northbound travelers on SR 49. The structure will be about 7 feet tall, 14 feet wide, and about 5 feet thick. A plaque in the middle will read, “Welcome to Nevada County, Established 1851”, with the emblem of a miner silhouette on each side. The monument will be placed just past the Bear River Bridge on SR 49 at Rincon Way.

County Supervisor Sue Horne spearheaded a planning committee to organize the project, and the South Nevada County Chamber of Commerce will contract with Sandstorm Signs of Quincy to create the project made from gray granite. All of the County’s Chambers of Commerce will support the effort to raise the \$20,000 needed for the monument. The Gateway Monument will be paid for by private donations only. No public funds will be used on any portion of this project. If you would like to contribute to the monument, give Bobbie Powell a call at the South Nevada County Chamber of Commerce, 268-1575 ext. 202. **NCTC**

## Dorsey Drive Open House on March 21<sup>st</sup>

The Dorsey Drive Interchange project will be the topic of discussion at a Caltrans Open House March 21<sup>st</sup> from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Grass Valley Veterans Building, 255 South Auburn Street.

The *Draft Environmental Document* has been prepared for circulation and comment, and Caltrans is seeking public input as an important step in the planning and development process.

Caltrans Design, Environmental, Right-of-Way, Landscape, Traffic, and Transportation Planning staff will be at the open house to explain displays and to solicit input from the community. Bring your questions and comments to the open house, or submit your comments to Caltrans by April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Attention: Japtej Gill, 2389 Gateway Oaks, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95833; or fax comments to: (916) 274-0602.

Copies of the report will be at the Grass Valley City Hall, 125 E. Main Street, and the Grass Valley Library, 207 Mill Street. See the report online at:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist3/departments/envinternet/dorseydrive/dorsey.htm>



## Signs Upgraded on SR 49 Through Citizen Input

On November 10, 2005 a Letter to the Editor in The Union newspaper told of a dangerous situation at the intersection of Highway 49 and Old Downieville Highway. It was reported that the turnout at this location is being used by people to park, even though there is a sign that says “Park Off Pavement”. The writer of the letter indicated she was waiting to turn onto the Old Downieville Highway and traffic was piling up behind her because a vehicle was parked in the turnout while the driver spoke on her cell phone. There was concern that someone may be injured in a similar situation and the writer questioned if Caltrans could make it clearer by posting new signs at the turnout stating “No Parking”.

NCTC staff faxed a copy of the letter to Caltrans District 3 Project Manager, Winder Bajwa. He forwarded the information to the Caltrans Traffic Department on November 14<sup>th</sup>. On November 28<sup>th</sup> a letter from former NCTC Commissioner Chet Krage again brought our attention to the Letter to the Editor and he asked NCTC staff to contact Caltrans requesting they examine the intersection for safety improvements. Executive Director Dan Landon wrote a letter on December 7<sup>th</sup> to Ron Sykes, Branch Chief for Caltrans District 3 Traffic Operations, and enclosed the letter from Mr. Krage requesting his review and potential action.

Mr. Sykes responded on January 11<sup>th</sup> that Traffic Engineering staff reviewed the location and found the stop sign had normal sight distance, the double yellow barrier striping was in good shape, and the accident data for the past five years indicated no problems. But they did agree that the “Park Off Pavement” sign was confusing. Mr. Sykes stated they would remove this sign and install two new signs that say “No Stopping Any Time”. The signs will be installed the week of March 13<sup>th</sup>, weather permitting.

This is a good example of how the citizens of our county can be more involved in creating safe driving conditions throughout Nevada County, and this is also a shining example of how our cooperative relationship with Caltrans has brought about a quick response and resolution to a potentially hazardous situation. **NCTC**

## Adopt-A-Highway Volunteers Needed

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 3 office is looking for volunteers to help with its *Adopt-A-Highway* program in Nevada County. Adoptions usually span a two-mile stretch of roadside and permits are issued for five-year periods. A group may apply for additional five-year permits. Volunteers work between six to twenty-four times per year, depending on the location, and most work is done on weekends. Groups who want to participate in the program can be as small as one individual or as large as 100 persons. Caltrans provides the safety training, equipment, and trash bags necessary to do the work.

Nevada County has ten adoptable highway segments within the boundaries

of the County needing volunteers. Work activities could include one or more of the following:

- Removing litter (work frequency varies with location)
- Planting and establishing trees or wildflowers
- Removing graffiti
- Controlling vegetation

Caltrans recognizes each individual/organization by erecting a sign within the adopted segment of highway with the volunteer individual’s/organization’s name. Caltrans District 3 recognizes two organizations annually and gives an award for Volunteer of the Year.

The Adopt-A-Highway program started in 1989 and, with the help of over 120,000 Californians, has kept over 15,000 shoulder-miles of roadside clean statewide. If you are interested in volunteering for this program, call (530) 741-4310. For more information on the Adopt-A-Highway program, go to this website: <http://adopt-a-highway.dot.ca.gov> **NCTC**

